

SENATE RECORD VOTE ANALYSIS

106th Congress
1st Session

Vote No. 132

May 19, 1999, 9:26 p.m.
Page S-5582 Temp. Record

JUVENILE JUSTICE/Afterschool Programs

SUBJECT: Violent and Repeat Juvenile Offender Accountability and Rehabilitation Act of 1999 . . . S. 254. Hatch motion to table the Boxer amendment No. 319.

ACTION: MOTION TO TABLE AGREED TO, 53-47

SYNOPSIS: As introduced, S. 254, the Violent and Repeat Juvenile Offender Accountability and Rehabilitation Act of 1999, will modernize Federal grant programs that give aid to State and local governments for juvenile law enforcement and juvenile crime prevention efforts. Approximately \$1 billion per year for the next 5 years will be authorized for those grant programs. Also, \$100 million annually will be authorized for joint Federal-State-local efforts to address gang-related juvenile crime.

The Boxer amendment would authorize \$600 million per year for each of the next 5 fiscal years for the 21st Century Learning Centers Program, which is currently authorized at \$20 million per year. It would also make substantial modifications to that program.

Debate was limited by unanimous consent. After debate, Senator Hatch moved to table the Boxer amendment. Generally, those favoring the motion to table opposed the amendment; those opposing the motion to table favored the amendment.

Those favoring the motion to table contended:

This bill is intended to reform juvenile justice systems in the country. It is not an education bill. The primary purpose of the Boxer amendment is to support afterschool programs in order to improve education, or at least that is what we were told when we considered the same amendment earlier this year. Now, to justify adding it to this bill, we are being told that its primary purpose is to babysit juvenile delinquents in the afternoon to keep them out of trouble. Whatever the purpose of the amendment, adding it to any bill after just a few minutes of debate would be irresponsible, both on policy and fiscal grounds.

On policy grounds, we note that this amendment would substantially change the purpose of an existing program, the 21st Century Learning Program and, at the same time, would increase its authorization by 1500 percent. In effect, our colleagues are asking us

(See other side)

YEAS (53)			NAYS (47)			NOT VOTING (0)	
Republicans (53 or 96%)	Democrats (0 or 0%)		Republicans (2 or 4%)	Democrats (45 or 100%)		Republicans (0)	Democrats (0)
Abraham	Helms		Snowe	Akaka	Kennedy		
Allard	Hutchinson		Specter	Baucus	Kerrey		
Ashcroft	Hutchison			Bayh	Kerry		
Bennett	Inhofe			Biden	Kohl		
Bond	Jeffords			Bingaman	Landrieu		
Brownback	Kyl			Boxer	Lautenberg		
Bunning	Lott			Breaux	Leahy		
Burns	Lugar			Bryan	Levin		
Campbell	Mack			Byrd	Lieberman		
Chafee	McCain			Cleland	Lincoln		
Cochran	McConnell			Conrad	Mikulski		
Collins	Murkowski			Daschle	Moynihan		
Coverdell	Nickles			Dodd	Murray		
Craig	Roberts			Dorgan	Reed		
Crapo	Roth			Durbin	Reid		
DeWine	Santorum			Edwards	Robb		
Domenici	Sessions			Feingold	Rockefeller		
Enzi	Shelby			Feinstein	Sarbanes		
Fitzgerald	Smith, Bob			Graham	Schumer		
Frist	Smith, Gordon			Harkin	Torricelli		
Gorton	Stevens			Hollings	Wellstone		
Gramm	Thomas			Inouye	Wyden		
Grams	Thompson			Johnson			
Grassley	Thurmond						
Gregg	Voinovich						
Hagel	Warner						
Hatch							

EXPLANATION OF ABSENCE:

- 1—Official Business
- 2—Necessarily Absent
- 3—Illness
- 4—Other

SYMBOLS:

- AY—Announced Yea
- AN—Announced Nay
- PY—Paired Yea
- PN—Paired Nay

to approve a huge new education program with minimal debate or consideration of the need for such a program, the effect of this particular proposal, or the effect of any possible alternatives. The 21st Century Learning Program, which was authored by Senator Jeffords to promote the broader use of school facilities, equipment, and resources, was initially opposed by the Clinton Administration. Each year the Administration recommended eliminating it. Then, starting 2 years ago, it changed course. By regulatory fiat it turned this multi-purpose program into an effort to provide afterschool services at public schools and requested large funding increases. Many of us are very supportive of having afterschool programs, but that does not mean that we should just throw money at the idea. We still have a responsibility to think before we act. Public schools currently provide less than one-third of the afterschool care in America. Other community groups, such as Boys and Girls Clubs, provide most of the care. How do our colleagues propose to integrate that care with the care they are proposing? Do they think it will supplement it, or supplant it, or have they given the matter any thought at all? Why do they believe that having a massive new Federal effort to start afterschool programs in public schools will be the most efficient and effective way to proceed? Not one of these questions has been answered. No hearings have been held; no alternative proposals have been considered.

On fiscal grounds, we note that no consideration is given in this amendment to where the money would come from; over 5 years, our colleagues just want the Federal Government to add \$3 billion to its proposed spending. The Federal Government still has huge fiscal problems to address with Social Security and Medicare. Every Senator is on record as believing that the Social Security surpluses that the Federal Government is projected to run should be saved for Social Security, not spent on unrelated matters such as afterschool programs. Our colleagues cannot continue to propose to spend and spend and spend without using up the Social Security surpluses. This whole bill will only spend about \$1 billion per year; we think that our colleagues should be a little more careful with how they propose to spend the taxpayers' money.

As we told our colleagues earlier this year, we will be pleased to consider this large new spending proposal when we reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act this summer. After hearings, expert testimony, and careful debate we may decide that it has merit. We may decide that the Federal Government, which has a huge debt and large fiscal problems ahead of it, really should give money to the States, which are in very good fiscal shape and are generally running budget surpluses, so that they can pay for a responsibility that has historically been a State responsibility. We will not approve spending an extra \$600 million per year on an unexamined proposal after just a few minutes of debate, though. We strongly urge the rejection of this amendment.

Those opposing the motion to table contended:

Additional Federal support for afterschool care is essential for communities across the country. Those communities are working hard to provide the needed services, but they cannot do it alone. Wealthier parents can afford to pay for care, but the parents of many at-risk kids simply cannot come up with the thousands of dollars in cost for private programs. If the public schools are not able to help, those children are left unattended all afternoon. Starting afterschool programs reduces juvenile crime. The Police Activities League has written us a letter in which it states that "Afterschool youth development programs, like those proposed in your amendment, have been shown to cut juvenile crime immediately, sometimes by 40 to 70 percent." Numerous other police and community groups support this amendment because they know that it will work. If we keep kids busy, they will not commit crimes in the unsupervised hours before their parents get home from work. This proposition is beyond dispute. We urge our colleagues to support this amendment.